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archives," he wrote in 1775, " I do not want it to be badly written." Despite the unceasing revisions, he talked better than he wrote. His style is clear but colourless and undistinguished. It is a narrative of public events in which the personality of the principal actor is not obtruded, though he sometimes lashes out at his foes. Two volumes are devoted to the first Silesian wars, two to the Seven Years War, one to the Polish and Bavarian episodes of his later life. The *Hisfoire de mon Temps*, published immediately after his death, did not altogether please his brother Prince Henry and other performers on the stage. Yet the royal author also criticizes himself. He confesses to occasional errors both as soldier and statesman. There are of course the usual mistakes in dates and figures, and the busiest man in Europe wrote too quickly. But he earns our gratitude for describing momentous events so fully from his own point of view.

Frederick had a lofty conception of the historian's task. " I have risen above all prejudices," he writes in the preface to the Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg. " I have regarded princes, kings and relatives as ordinary men." The eulogies of the Great Elector and Frederick William I—une laborieuse dans un corps robuste—are balanced by his indictment of the extravagance and irresponsibility of King Frederick I. That his father was the terror of his family we are not told ; we hear only the best. ** He left 66,000 soldiers, a full treasury, and all his affairs in marvellous order.* In the preface to the *Hisfoire de mon Temps* Frederick claims to be equally truthful. ** Many have written history, but few have told the truth. I shall advance nothing without proofs. I shall not conceal the immortal glory won by many officers in my campaigns. I dedicate this feeble essay as a

monument of
my gratitude. I write for posterity, so I shall
write without
concealments. I shall only speak of myself
when I must."
" Ce n'est que la fortune qui decide de la
reputation; celui
qu'elle favorise est applaudi, celui qu'elle
dedaigne est blind."
These lofty resolutions are fairly well carried
out. The tone
is calm and impersonal, though there is an
occasional flash.
No one, we are told, had so many clothes, laces,
boots, shoes
and slippers as Count Briihl: only with such a
prince as
Augustus II of Saxony could such a man be the
chief Minister.
The " unheard of perfidy " of England under Bute
is angrily
denounced, and in old age he lectures Joseph II
precisely as
he himself had been denounced in his youth. "
The enthusi-